

“SQUARES” – A REVISION ACTIVITY

1. Introduction

In the process of learning a student works more willingly with another student than with a group (Aronson, Wilson, Akert 1997). They feel less restricted and behave more spontaneously. Due to that, various games and pair-work activities are used to optimise the process of foreign language learning and such is the function of the activity described below. The above-mentioned types of interaction make the participants more active because of both cognitive and emotional involvement. In order to achieve the expected results, it is advisable to use the techniques which will make the interaction possible. Experts in the field such as Tony Buzan, Edward de Bono, Gordon Dryden and Jeannette Vos stress the didactic value of such exercises (cf. Buzan 1996; de Bono 1999; Dryden and Vos 2000).

2. Purpose of the activity

The type of the activity I present can be used with students of all levels of advancement when revising a portion of material.

The activity has got two aims. Firstly, it is to help revise a portion of the material covered in the classroom. It can be conducted to check the understanding of a piece of grammar (reported speech, passive voice, tenses), or knowledge of vocabulary (proverbs, idioms, phrasal verbs, thematic vocabulary). Secondly, it is to make students actively involved in the process of checking what they have learnt.

To illustrate my point with an example, you will find attached photocopiable sheets for **C1** students, which can be used when revising the passive voice.

The source of my inspiration was the book *Gry wakacyjne* (1996). All the sentences used in the photocopiable material are from *Time*.

3. Presentation of the activity

The activity requires approximately 15 minutes and is to be conducted in pairs. If it is done at the beginning of the lesson it may also function as a „warm-up” exercise, especially for more advanced students, who should have already been familiar with a given grammatical issue.

3.1. Preparatory stage

For each student you have to prepare three grids, each divided into 16 squares. The first grid contains questions, the second one correct answers, and the third one shows wrong answers (see sheets 1A, 2A, 3A). The answers (sheets 2A & 3A) should be written in such a way that they are a mirror image of the sheet with the questions (sheet 1A). When you have done that, turn sheets 2A, 3A over and mark the squares 1-16 on copy 2A; the squares on handout 3A should be marked with the letters A-P. Then cut the answers 2A and 3A; sheet 1A remains uncut.

In the same way, prepare a set of three grids for student B.

3.2. How to conduct the activity

Students A and B get their sets. Each of them keeps the sheet with questions (1A or 1B respectively) and gives the other person the cut grids. Student B gets 2A and 3A; student A, 2B and 3B. ***You have to tell them that they mustn't turn the squares over.*** Student A then chooses one of the questions in 1A at random and student B looks for the answer on the squares that they have got. When they think they know the answer, they give the square with the answer to student A, who puts it in the appropriate place on his grid with the questions. Then they swap roles.

When they have completed the task, Student A checks the answers for B and vice-versa.

3.3. How to check the exercise

Students A and B turn the little squares over. If the activity has been done correctly, the numbers on the other side of the little squares will be 1–16 only.

Alternatively, instead of writing numbers and letters you can glue pictures cut from a magazine onto copies 2A, 3A (2B, 3B). When the students check the answers, they will see a picture if they have done the exercise correctly.

4. Conclusions

Having conducted the activity with my C1 groups I noticed that both of the goals mentioned in point 2 were reached. The students were involved in classwork and, moreover, the exercise made students feel responsible for what they were learning

because it was not the teacher who was correcting the mistakes but the learners themselves. The students really enjoyed the satisfaction of being able to detect mistakes and then find correct answers.

The above-mentioned observation makes me conclude that personal responsibility for the knowledge one gains is of invaluable importance in the process of foreign language learning.

Bibliography

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Dryden G., and Vos J., 2000. *Rewolucja w uczeniu*. Poznań: Moderski i spółka.
Gry wakacyjne, 1996. Poznań: Oficyna Wydawnicza Atena.

HANDOUTS

ACTIVE TO PASSIVE VOICE

STUDENT A

1A (Questions)

A British sugar magnate imported the vehicles from Japan toward the end of the 19 th century.	Although oil resources are still abundant, the company is exploring for new reserves, extending the life of existing fields.	Of the 11 students he recently took to the museum, three felt dizzy.	The experts say that ingesting just one microgram of polonium is enough to kill most people.
The human, economic, political and military costs of the war will mount.	The president and his aides have promised changes.	Customers saw long queues and kept on walking.	She will have to understand it that today's opponent could be tomorrow's ally.
It takes long to bring into focus the ways in which his influence has seeped into the mainstream.	The tension between the realist and idealist approach has long split the party between traditional conservatives and neocons.	You may find the perfect antidote to all those rich pastries and rococo buildings in the clean Park Hotel.	Scientists have seen bottlenose dolphins, thought to be the smartest marine animals, using sea sponges as fishing tools.
Most of the world's big cities face a basic set of problems: traffic, pollution, crime.	Just a few people will remember his name and even fewer his accomplishments.	The leader had opened the dialogue with the opposing party before the last election.	John Brown visited Andrew Black a few years after they had both left office.

2A (Correct answers)

It is said that ingesting just one microgram of polonium is enough to kill most people.	Of the 11 students that were recently taken to the museum, three felt dizzy.	X	The vehicles were imported from Japan by a British sugar magnate toward the end of the 19 th century.
It will have to be understood that today's opponent could be tomorrow's ally.	Long queues were seen by customers and they kept on walking.	Changes have been promised by the president and his aides.	X
Bottlenose dolphins, thought to be the smartest marine animals, have been seen by scientists using sea sponges as fishing tools.	The perfect antidote to all those rich pastries and rococo buildings may be found in the clean Park Hotel.	The party has long been split between traditional conservatives and neocons by the tension between the realist and idealist approach.	X
Andrew Black was visited by John Brown a few years after office had been left by both of them.	The dialogue with the opposing party had been opened by the leader before the last election.	His name will be remembered by just a few people and his accomplishments by even fewer.	A basic set of problems: traffic, pollution, crime is faced by most of the world's big cities.

3A (Wrong answers)

The experts say that being ingested just one microgram of polonium is enough to kill most people.	Of the 11 students that had recently been taken to the museum, three felt dizzy.	Although oil resources are still abundant, new reserves are being explored for by the company, being extended the life of existing fields.	The vehicle was imported from Japan by a British sugar magnate toward the end of the 19 th century.
It will has to be understood that today's opponent could be tomorrow's ally.	Long queues were seen by customers and were kept on walking.	The president and his aides have been promised changes	The human, economic, political and military costs of the war will be mounted .
Bottlenose dolphins have been seen by scientists, thought to be the smartest marine animals, using sea sponges as fishing tools.	The perfect antidote to all those rich pastries and rococo buildings may be founded in the clean Park Hotel.	The party has long been splitted between traditional conservatives and neocons by the tension between the realist and idealist approach.	It takes long to bring into focus the ways in which his influence has been seeped into the mainstream.
John Brown was visited by Andrew Black a few years after they had both left office.	The dialogue with the opposing party had being opened by the leader before the last election.	His name would be remembered by just a few people and his accomplishments by even fewer.	A basic set of problems: traffic, pollution, crime is being faced by most of the world's big cities.

STUDENT B
1B (Questions)

Reykjavik marked a turning point toward a reduction of nuclear weapons	Monnet started out in his father's business.	Once you reach later life, it's harder to believe in heroes.	Every movement needs a birth and an adolescence and without that it wouldn't have grown up.
Just as we speak of classical painters or writers, Mr. Al Johnson is a classical chef.	Since Maria Callas' time people have measured every female opera singer against this powerful role model.	The designer's views on fashion and luxury still form the underpinnings of those global businesses today.	The success of his flight secured the future of space exploration and the development of inventions and technologies that now enhance the daily lives of citizens.
Europe has produced many a women's tennis champion over the past 60 years.	You are eating something that you can only eat here.	Fixing global warming will require more than unleashing the invisible hand.	She is seeking \$10 million in damages.
Until recently, the government has ignored such allegations suggesting that insurgents masquerading as cops or soldiers were deceiving the victims.	The parties boycotted the vote on the bill and are threatening to withdraw from the government.	I think they've undergone a significant transformation in terms of how they look at the problem.	I'll take this down to the river tonight, and they will be there to trade as usual.

2B (Correct answers)

A birth and an adolescence are needed by every movement and without that it wouldn't have grown up.	Once later life is reached, heroes are harder to be believed in.	X	A turning point toward a reduction of nuclear weapons was marked in Reykjavik.
The future of space exploration and the development of inventions and technologies that now enhance the daily lives of citizens was secured by the success of his flight.	The underpinnings of those global businesses today are still formed by the designer's views on fashion and luxury.	Since Maria Callas' time every female opera singer has been measured against this powerful role model.	Just as painters or writers are spoken of as classical, Mr. Al Johnson is a classical chef.
\$10 million are being sought in damages.	More than unleashing the invisible hand will be required to fix global warming.	You are eating something that can only be eaten here.	Many a women's tennis champion has been produced by Europe over the past 60 years.
This will be taken down to the river tonight, and they will be there to trade as usual.	X	The vote on the bill was boycotted by the parties, which are threatening to withdraw from the government.	Until recently, such allegations suggesting that insurgents masquerading as cops or soldiers were deceiving the victims have been ignored by the government.

3B (Wrong answers)

A birth and an adolescence are needed by every movement and without that it wouldn't have been grown up.	Once later life is reached, heroes are harder to be believed.	Monnet was started out in his father's business.	A turning point toward a reduction of nuclear weapons was mark in Reykjavik.
The future of space exploration and the development of inventions and technologies that now enhance the daily lives of citizens were secured by the success of his flight.	The underpinnings of those global businesses today are still being formed by the designer's views on fashion and luxury.	Since Maria Callas' time every female opera singer had been measured against this powerful role model.	Just as classical painters or writers are spoken, Mr. Al Johnson is a classical chef.
\$10 million are being seeked in damages.	More than unleashing the invisible hand will be required fixing global warming.	Something is eaten that can only be eaten here.	Many a women's tennis champion have been produced by Europe over the past 60 years.
This will be taken down to the river tonight, and they will be there to be traded as usual.	I think a significant transformation in terms of how they look at the problem has been undergone.	The vote on the bill was boycotted by the parties, which are being threatened to withdraw from the government.	Until recently, such allegations have been ignored by the government suggesting that insurgents masquerading as cops or soldiers were deceiving the victims.